



Celebrating special children.
Renewing their families.

"I rave about Jill's House to anyone who will listen. You are all a blessing and I am so grateful for everything you do. You inspire me with your love and patience and I feel like someone is wrapping their comforting arms around me when I walk through those doors and sit by the fire. You may find me camping out there one day!! Thank you, thank you, thank you!"

-Tyson's Family

REFLECTIONS ON A YEAR OF VOLUNTEERING



Joyce D'Andrea has been volunteering at Jill's House for just about a year now. She is particularly fond of the library at Jill's House and shared that her favorite memory of the year was of, "a child who scoured the library for a particular farm book - and once found, giggled and sang "Old Macdonald" with all who would join!"

The mission of Jill's House resonated with Joyce because

of her experience working with children with special needs as a pediatric ophthalmic technician. When she attended Jill's House volunteer orientation she, "knew, immediately, this was a fit for me." She went on to share that the pace of Jill's House helps her to find rest in the midst of her busy life saying, "Jill's House is more than respite to the families of the children, it's also respite for my soul - a place where humility and grace meets peace and joy."

Thanks to Joyce and all of our amazing volunteers who love on our kids so well and make the gift of respite possible for our families!

FAMILY CHRISTMAS PARTY



The Jill's House annual Christmas party is a time for all the families of the children we serve to come together and celebrate the season. At this year's party on December 11th, there were crafts, cookie-decorating stations, free family portraits, delicious food and desserts everywhere you looked, and Santa even made an appearance! A free toy raffle was made possible by the generosity of the [American Girl Store](#) in

Tyson's Corner Center. It was a time for parents to connect to each other, children to spend time with their friends outside of respite programs, and for families to enjoy a Christmas party in a safe space where they could just relax. Our Family Support team did such a beautiful job with the event and we believe our families were greatly blessed by the time. We can't wait to do it again next year!



FAMILY SPOTLIGHT

Eric has been coming to Jill's House since the beginning of the school year. Recently, we talked to his mother, Trish, about their family's experience at Jill's House over the past few months.

How do you typically use your time of respite?

The first night that Eric spent at Jill's House, if I'm being honest, was not a respite so much as a trial, but in the end it was a complete success! We feel completely at ease when Eric is at Jill's house and we KNOW he is safe, having fun, getting his medicines, and enjoying peer time with new friends. We look forward to sharing our time with each other - making simple plans



to do simple things like bike rides, watching movies at home, and eating at restaurants that do NOT serve chicken and french fries.

What does Eric like to do at Jill's House?

When the children were younger, Eric used to ask why his sister could do sleepovers and play dates but he couldn't. Now his trips to Jill's House have allowed him to have those experiences! Eric's favorite room at Jill's House is the music room. Eric says, "I love the music room, mom. It has great music and on the wall it says 'Jesus Loves Me.' The music room makes me the happiest!" He is always excited about going to Jill's House and he checks with me most every day about when his next visit is coming up.

How has Jill's House impacted your family?

The way that Jill's House respects our whole family through the kindness to and care of one has been the biggest impact. The smiles and appreciation that each staff member and volunteer shares with our son serves our family exponentially. In a life of "walking on egg shells," always on alert to what might come next, just 24 hours of respite gives a feeling of relaxation that cannot be described. We thank each and every member of Jill's House for sharing your hearts, talents, and skills with all the children you care for. YOU are a Blessing to our family!

ALUMNI COME BACK TO JILL'S HOUSE



The third week of December, Jill's House hosted our first ever alumni camp! Former guests of Jill's House were invited to come to a Weekend Adventure program just for young adults outside of Washington D.C. They got to reconnect with the staff and volunteers from Jill's House as well as with each other. The weekend activities were Christmas themed and the camp was decorated for the occasion. The highlight of the weekend was time at the zip-line, both riding it and cheering on friends. It was such a pleasure to see old friends and we hope to continue this tradition in the future.

SAVE THE DATE!

A CELEBRATION OF

Special Children 
A Benefit for **Jill's**
HOUSE.

The third week of December, Jill's House The 2017 *Celebration of Special Children* for Jill's House will be held on May 13 at 6pm at the Ritz-Carlton, Tyson's. Enjoy an evening of elegance and celebration with musical performances by internationally recognized star, Denyse Graves, and Kaitlyn Maher, America's Got Talent finalist. To become a sponsor or to buy tickets, follow [this link](#).



"Like" or "Follow" us!

